THE LITHUANIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

131 /3/The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic is situated in the western part of the S.S.S.R.

The territory of the Lithuanian S.S.R. constitutes 65,200 square kilometers. In the south it borders on the Polish Democratic Republic. Inside the Soviet Union Lithuania's neighbors are: in the north, the Latvian S.S.R.; in the west and the southwest, the Kaliningrad Oblast', R.S.F.S.R. The northwestern part of the Lithuanian S.S.R. occupies the coast of the Baltic Sea.

133 The surface of the Lithuanian lands presents a hilly plain, cut through by rows of elevations, lakes, swamps, and woods. There are up to 1,743 lakes in the country. The majority of these are situated in the south. The most cut-up section of the district is found in the seacoast province, which stretches form the southwest to the northeast. The elevations in the west reach from 175 to 200 meters. This is the so-called Zhemaitis* elevation, or the

*Editor's Note--Names which did not occur in English reference books available to me occur in a form transliterated from Russia and are marked with an asterisk.

Telshiai Mountains.

In the area of the lower Nemunas there is a valley that merges into a similar valley along the lower course of the Neris (Viliya) and the Nevezys rivers. A strip of valley from 20 to 25 kilometers wide extends along the Baltic seacoast which forms in the south the shallow Kurshiu Marios (Courland Spit). The landscape in the east and in the south of the Republic is extremely varied. "Hills beyond hills, and beyond those-little hillocks," - thus the poet Baranauskas describes his native land. /4/ In Sarasay mountains and hillocks are surrounded by woods, and they look into the lakes as if admiring themselves. Dzukiya competes for beauty with the Sarasay country. The same hills and woods are scattered amoung fields and lake islands, like rich nosegays. Here is the largest number of lakes.

133 Zhemaitya* (Zhmud*) is beautiful, with its forests, the
529 largest in Lithuania, and its Shatriya* and Medvagalis* mountain, steeped in legends. Zhemaitiya* ends at the Baltic Sea, with the ports of Klaipeda and Shventoiji, and with the sea resorts Palanga, Smelta, Yodkranta*, and Nida, which are known far beyond the Republic's frontiers. Palanga, with its pine woods and snow-white sand dunes is one of the finest resorts on the Baltic shore.

133 Neringa* presents a remarkable natural wonder. It is a long strip of earth stretching several tens of kilometers to the south, separating the Baltic Sea from Kurshiu Marios (Courland Spit). It is covered in places by young woodland or low pines, and in some places magnificent sand dunes rise, which around the hamlet of Nida are the highest in Europe. Lithuania's largest river is the Nemunas (Neman). It is navigable from the Alytus. Its most important tributaries inside Lithuania are the Neris (which in turn has its tributaries Shventoiya* and Nevezys), and also the Dubysa and the Sheshupe.

The lowest parts of Lithuania are swampy. There are especially many swamps in the Siauliai area and to the west from the middle of the Nemunas.

137 Wooded surface comprised before the Second World War, 19 percent of the whole Republic. About two-thirds of the woods are coniferous, and about one-third is deciduous. Among the coniferous varieties fir trees and pines predominate. Among the deciduous varieties the ash, the birch, the aspen, and, less often, the alder and oak predominate. The meadows are covered with dense, mellow grass. The natural pastures, and also fodder grass, are the basis for the development of animal husbandry.

132 Owing to the proximity of the sea, the climate is damp and mild. There are no severe winters and no dry winds. The average annual temperature is from plus 6.5° to 7° C.; the average temperature in /5/ January is from minus 2.5° to minus 4.7°; in July it is from plus 17° to 18.6°.

162 The population of Soviet Lithuania (according to the statistics of 1940) is 3,150,000. The bulk of the population consists of Lithuanians (80 per cent). In addition there are Russians, Poles, White Russians, Jews, and Latvians.

631 Administratively Soviet Lithuania is divided into 41 uyezds, 320 volosts, and 2,774 apilinks (selsoviets).

361 The capital of the Republic is Vilnius. The city of Vilnius was founded in the tenth century and has been the capital since 1323. It is situated at the junction of the rivers Vilnele (Vileika) and Neris, on the shores of both rivers.

The largest cities of the Republic are Kaunas, Klaipeda, Siauliai, Paniveshis.

135 In the Republic there are rich resources in water power, of peat and mineral construction material.